2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AN50 Badaga AN50

562 582 concurrently or sequentially, from his aunts' and nieces' generation levels as well as from his own: such co-wives would all attain the generation level of their husband by these marriages. It is this outlook on women that permits Badaga marriages even between differently ranked clans without any thought of hypergamy being advantageous or hypogamy reprehensible.

582 604 Marriage between cross-cousins is the ideal, but because a young man's spiritual guidance is the responsibility of the mother's brother his daughter is less preferable as a bride for that youth than the father's sister's daughter. The mother's brother, called a *guru*, has a distinctly superior status to his nephew's, yet as giver of a daughter in marriage he must occupy an inferior position in the eyes of the groom and the groom's parents. This is because the bride's father feels under some obligation to the family who will take away his daughter. As one old man explained the matter, the feeling is expressed in the newly emerging practice of offering gifts of some thousands of rupees to 'bribe' a youth into a marriage. The likelihood of role ambiguity in cases where a man marries his *guru's* daughter is avoided either by searching out a classificatory cross-cousin, or by choosing the daughter of a mother's brother other than the spiritual guide or by marrying a father's sister's daughter. (Only among the Toreas is marriage with a classificatory niece permissible: she is a father's brother's daughter's daughter.)

[178] [583] [184]

Role ambiguity may also affect the women in a household where a man has married his *guru's* daughter. In that situation the bride's aunt (her father's sister) is also her husband's mother. The bride, relying on her father's influence over his own sister, tends to quarrel more with her than in the alternative case where a man has married his father's sister's daughter: the latter should be more timid and controllable and thus more appreciated.

[578] [596]

582 583 628 A further reason for preferring marriage with a daughter of the father's sister is the need for reciprocity in bride-giving between exogamous villages. If a man marries his mother's brother's daughter, he is *taking* a girl from the same village, lineage and family whence his own father also *took* a wife. On the other hand a reciprocal relationship has been honoured, Badagas feel, when the youth *takes* his bride (the father's sister's daughter) from the same village, lineage and family to which his father's father *gave* a daughter in marriage. Since bride-giving is thought to be somewhat demeaning, this reciprocity allows the families to maintain their relative social standing.

[558]

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

with non-Badaga prostitutes. The lower-class group, as we shall see below (3.7—*c*), has some extra-marital sexual contact with a wide range of other Badaga men, including of course some who have also had relations with diseased prostitutes. Since the four chosen villages are representative in their subcultures of these four phratries, are all accessible to therapists and midwives, are located within three miles of each other in the middle of the plateau, are all at the same elevation of about 6,500 feet, but in no instances were using contraceptives in 1963, it is difficult to avoid explaining the divergence between the average number of children in these families by any other means than this hypothesis: that *there is a positive correlation between socio-ritual status* (*or extent of religious orthodoxy*) *and the fertility of women.* I realize this may sound like moralizing; but it is the census data and not I myself that shows the "good," orthodox Badaga parents to have more live births than those who indulge more in inter-community, extra-marital relations.

The number of stillbirths and abortions is something I know nothing about. In one well-to-do Adikiri farming family which happened to include two skilled midwife-therapists, a woman married at the age of 12 conceived first at 18, and then had a total of five live births and another five miscarriages or neonate deaths. I have no reason to believe either that her husband (whom I know well) was diseased or that her birth history is really atypical.

Sex Education

3.2. A useful way of approaching the matter of Badaga sexual practice is to ask how the individual acquires his knowledge of the matter. The answer is that diverse sources are available, including conversation with others, observation of men and animals, and experimentation. We shall elaborate on each of these in turn.

Conversation on sexual matters occurs not only with members of one's own sex but also with lovers. Since in each case the party with whom one holds such conversation may be either an age-mate or some older person, there is a relatively free flow of information from one generation to another, and between the two sexes. Nonetheless some propriety is observed in seeking the information. Parents do not usually give any sex instruction to their children, nor do elder brothers generally give it to younger siblings or elder sisters to their younger sisters. The mother's brother, who is a kind of

41 Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

spiritual guide, does not give his nephews or nieces any of this information either. Girls may exceptionally be able to get advice from their mothers or grandmothers.

Girls do have sexual discussions however, mainly with other girls of the same age, and especially with adolescent girls who have recently married or who are about to be married. A group of adolescent friends is thus where a young bride will find out about the sexual experiences of others. In general young girls are not included in such discussions before they reach puberty, as it is felt they would not understand.

There is a situation in which the instruction of girls used to be more formalized, and at the same time allowed for an older, experienced woman to teach them. Until the early part of this century unmarried adolescent girls used to sleep together in one house of their village. Since the young boys did the same thing in another house, this allowed married adults more freedom to engage in sexual activity at home. Naturally the girls sometimes had sexual discussions and the woman, often a widow, in whose house they were staying would usually join in with some practical advice.

The custom of boys sleeping together in one house has virtually ceased, but it did offer them too an opportunity for sexual discussions. Boys show an interest in sex at an earlier age than girls do, and from the age of 12 they take part in discussions with youths much older than themselves, including some who are married. Thus some boys may joke with a newly-wed friend about what they have heard him doing at night, and he in turn may choose to give them a detailed description.

Boys who are not attending school have a great deal of time to spend on sexual discussions and experimentation. Usually too there are some idle old men in the village who kill time by talking about sex with the boys or discuss the subject amongst themselves. Young husbands and wives may also have such discussions, just as unmarried lovers do. Groups of women may be quite frank about their experiences in front of each other, too. Newly married brides can hope to learn something from their perhaps more experienced husbands, and adolescent boys sometimes manage to learn from the wife of an elder brother.

3.3. Conversation inevitably leads to observation, and in a peasant society opportunities abound for watching sexual activity. Most visible, of course, are the dogs and cattle in the village, whose be-

562 582 602 generation level of a woman is that of her husband, however, and can change as she marries successive husbands from different generations. It is supposedly possible for a single Badaga man to marry, either concurrently or sequentially, a woman and her daughter and her mother. All three co-wives would attain the generation level of their husband by this marriage. The Badaga outlook towards women is one that permits marriages even between hierarchically ranked sibs without there arising any thought of hypergamy being advantageous and hypogamy reprehensible. Such an attitude, let it be noted, is most unusual for an Indian society.

582 No Badaga should marry a girl related to him as a classificatory sister; that is, a mother's sister's daughter or a father's brother's daughter. Nor should he marry a girl related to him in a similar way, though the connection goes back a generation further: mother's mother's sister's daughter's daughter, or else father's father's brother's son's daughter. Nor may a man marry his sister's daughter, a marriage permitted among some jatis elsewhere in South India. The general rule is that two people must not marry if they are in any way related through either a pair of brothers or a pair of sisters. The normal kinds of marriage are therefore with cross-cousins, either a father's sister's daughter or a mother's brother's daughter. However, because the mother's brother plays a very important part in a man's religious and social development, and because there is a great deal of interaction between him and his sister's son, it is felt that the mother's brother's daughter is more closely related to a man than his father's sister's daughter is. Amongst Badagas it is therefore generally thought that marriage with the father's sister's daughter is the best arrangement possible; not because a marriage with the mother's brother's daughter would in any sense be closer to incest, but simply because it would probably lead to a certain amount of quarreling

(604)

B: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1982 AN50 Badaga AN50

(amongst others) either his FZD or his MBD, but there is a marked preference for a FZD and some good reasons for it.[3] One involves a feeling of status congruence. Men, it is believed, demean themselves somewhat by becoming bride-givers. This is acknowledged nowadays by the payment of dowry, a new custom among the Badagas. But a young man's spiritual guide is not the family priest in this community; instead it is always his MB, whom he calls *guru* and also accords much respect. It is thus incongruent if that particular man should give his daughter in marriage to the very boy he has counselled. Marriage with a FZD, or with the daughter of a MB other than one's *guru*, gets around this emotional problem.

Patrilocality is another preference that is usually spoken of as an unbending rule. Yet there is in point of fact a term, *aḷiya se:tu*, for the live-in son-in-law, a young man who opts to live with his wife's family after their marriage. This is considered an undignified and pitiful thing to do, but it can bring real material advantages to a man whose wife has no brothers, and is a necessary alternative to virilocal residence in such a family. The epic ballad *Ba:la Sevana* deals with a man who moves into his father-in-law's village to help with the buffaloes, leaving his own mother in her village lamenting the loss of her only son, and bemoaning her fate since "there will be nobody to set fire to her corpse." It is interesting to note that Ba:la Sevana married into the Kunda region, one that used to be so economically distressed that its children were often sold into bondage for a period of years, thereby becoming the household servants of Badagas in other parts of the Nilgiris. The live-in son-in-law was one institution that helped make up for the loss of male children in those bad years, when bondage was the only answer to the threat of starvation in that region.

2. Patriliny and Patrilocality

Today the Badagas are successful cash-crop farmers specialising in cabbages, potatoes, and tea; those of the Kunda region are the wealthiest in the District. Until the early part of this century, on the other hand, they were all mainly farmers of millet. This and several other grains, together with dairy produce, provided their subsistence. When one delves further back in their history, to the 17th and 18th centuries when they were already well established on the Nilgiri Hills but with a population of under 2,000, one finds that the Badagas were already millet farmers yet thought of themselves as primarily buffalo herdsmen. This is reflected very clearly in a number of their epic ballads dating from that time. Since each family or lineage used once to have its own herd of buffaloes, then it is legitimate for us to consider

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[3] Letters placed in single apostrophes, 'A', 'B', 'C', etc.; stand for hypothetical people and are like personal names. Letters placed in double quotation marks, e.g. "M," "F," etc., indicate classificatory rather than actual kin relationships, and should be read as "in the category of mothers," and so on. Z = sister, S = son, etc.

people that Ego cannot marry because of agnatic relationship to a member of Ego's own lineage, she is a permissible marriage partner, although considered "M". S82

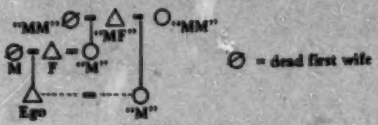

Diagram 10

In Diagram 11 we find that while Ego's son 'P' can marry the ZD of Ego, his other son 'Q' by Ego's "ZD" cannot marry Ego's actual ZD, as this would be considered tantamount to mother/son incest.

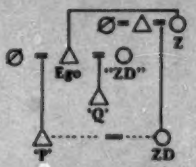

Diagram 11

What is called "uncle/niece" marriage is possible, but only under certain special circumstances. In Diagram 12, Ego cannot marry his actual ZD because he is always a *guru* to her, and has to perform certain ceremonies for her which preclude his being her husband too. He can however marry his sister's step-daughter, a classificatory "ZD", since she will have someone other than Ego to act as her *guru*; this would be permissible provided the second wife of the ZH had been taken from a lineage other than Ego's. (604)

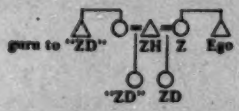

Diagram 12

Diagram 13 simply illustrates the fact that a male Ego may marry women of different generation levels all at once or one after another. Badagas generally do not marry women older than themselves, so it is assumed that all of these women are of a younger age than Ego. As relationship is only counted on the paternal side, any or all of these marriages would be permissible, simultaneously or sequentially. If 'Q' has a son 'Y' by Ego, while 'R' has a son 'X' by some other man, 'X' will call 'Y' "father." If Ego subsequently marries 'R', 'X' will then start to call 'Y' "brother." S82 S95